

a means connected to the control device is provided which is triggered by a forward edge of an article to be welded entering, or the rear edge of an article exiting, between the welding electrode rollers; and

wherein the control device is configured to receive from the means a signal indicating the edge of the article to be welded has entered between the electrode rollers and in dependence thereon to deliver to the switch arrangement a signal releasing the welding current to the electrode rollers; and

wherein the control device is configured to receive from the means a signal indicating the edge of the article to be welded has exited between the electrode rollers and in dependence thereon to deliver to the switch arrangement a signal to discontinue the welding current to the electrode rollers.--

--12. (Once Amended) A welding apparatus according to Claim 11, characterized in that the means is configured to detect the deflection of at least one of the welding electrode rollers by the article passing between the electrodes.--

--13. (Once Amended) A welding apparatus according to Claim 12, characterized in that the means for detecting the deflection comprises a setting arrangement by means of which the response to the position of the leading edge of the article to be welded is adaptable to the thickness of the article.--

--14. (Once Amended) A welding apparatus according to Claim 13, characterized in that the setting arrangement has a disk with a plurality of regions of different thickness in a predetermined proportion to the thickness of the articles to be welded.--

--15. (Once Amended) A welding apparatus according to Claim 14, characterized in that the disk is rotatably arranged, and the regions are recesses of different depth in the disk which are preferably each marked with the corresponding thickness of the article to be welded.--

Please add new claim 21:

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--21. (New) A welding apparatus according to claim 11, further comprising intermediate wire electrodes, wherein upon receipt of the signal indicating the edge of the article to be welded has entered between the electrode rollers, the control device delivers to the switch arrangement a signal to release the welding current to the intermediate wire electrodes; and

wherein upon receipt of the signal indicating the edge of the article to be welded has exited between the electrode rollers, the control device delivers to the switch arrangement a signal to discontinue the welding current to the intermediate wire electrodes.--

REMARKS

The remarks below follow the order provided by the Examiner.

4. Applicants affirm the election to prosecute claims 11-15 and 19-20, and therefore understand that claims 1-10 and 16-18 remain pending, but are withdrawn from further consideration by the Examiner in the present prosecution.
6. Claims 11-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the applicant regards as the invention. Specifically, the Examiner objects to the phrases "and if required" and "that can be" in claim 11. The objected to language has been removed by amendment. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.
8. Claims 11-13 and 19-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 5,676,862 issued to Matteson (hereinafter referred to as "Matteson"), or United States Patent No. 5,841,094 issued to Baumgartner (hereinafter referred to as "Baumgartner"), or United States Patent No. 5,391,853 issued to Grau et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Grau"). Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's rejection.